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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 SSM-03 SES-02 SAA-01 IO-13
HA-05 SY-05 A-01 OPR-02 OC-06 CCO-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 MCT-02 EB-08
TRSE-00 AID-05 /114 W
----------057866 191111Z /12
O P 191015Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9309
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, ASEC, LE
SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION: AUGU 19, 1978

REF: BEIRUT 4803 (DTG 181227Z AUG 78)

SUMMARY: THE CEASE-FIRE IS STILL HOLDING BUT TENSION
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IS RISING AS THE ADF AND CAMILLE CHAMOUN ACCUSE EACH
OTHER OF VIOLATING THE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT EAST
BEIRUT. THE PORT REMAINS EFFECTIVELY CLOSED. UN UNDER
SECRETARY GENERAL BRAIN URQUHART ARRIVED IN BEIRUT.
"A SENIOR OFFICER" OF THE LEBANESE ARMY ACCUSED THE U.S.
OF GOING BACK ON PLEDGES IT HAD MADE ABOUT SOUTH LEBANON
AND SAID THAT THE GOL HAD STOPPED SENDING SAAD HADDAD

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AND SAMI SHIDIAK THEIR SALARIES, ACCORDING TO IKE.
END SUMMARY.

1. BEIRUT CEASE-FIRE

A. THE CEASE-FIRE IS STILL GENERALLY HOLDING BUT TEN-
SION IS RISING, AS THE ADF AND CAMILLE CHAMOUN ACCUSED
EACH OTHER OF VIOLATING THE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT FOR
EAST BEIRUT.

2. STATEMENTS BY ADF

A. ADF COMMANDER SAMI KHATIB SAID ON AUGUST 18 THAT THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT IN EAST
BEIRUT HAD BEEN HALTED BY THE FAILURE OF THE MILITIAS TO
TOLD UP THEIR END OF THE DEAL. "WE HAD AGREED ON CLEAR STEPS
WHICH INCLUDED THE ELIMINATION OF ALL PARAMILITARY
MANIFESTATIONS AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF ARMED MEN FROM THE
STREETS. UNFORTUNATELY, NONE OF THIS HAPPENED." (COMMENT:
IN FACT, ARMED MILITIA DO REMAIN ON THE STREETS OF
ASHRAFIYAH. END COMMENT.)

B. AN ADF COMMUNIQUE SAID: "THE ASHRAFIYAH AREA
IS WITNESSING CERTAIN MILITARY PREPARATIONS BY ARMED
MEN ONLY TENS OF METERS AWAY FROM THE ADF POSITIONS...
THE ADF UNITS TOOK NO ACTION, LEAVING THE DOOR OPEN FOR
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NEW INITIATIVES TO STABILIZE THE SECURITY SITUATION IN
GENERAL, ALTHOUGH THE PARAMILITARY MANIFESTATIONS IN
ASHRAFIYAH, FURN-ASH-SHUBBAK AND HADATH REMAIN ALMOST
UNCHANGED, WHICH IS PREVENTING PEOPLE FROM RETURNING
TO THEIR HOMES AND RESUMING THEIR WORK."

3. STATEMENTS BY CAMILLE CHAMON

A. COMMENTING ON THE ADF COMMUNIQUE, CAMILLE CHAMOUN SAID
THAT THE SECURITY PLAN CALLED FOR AN ADF WITHDRAWAL FROM
ASHRAFIYAH AND THAT NO SUCH WITHDRAWAL HAD OCCURRED:

B. "WHAT IS PREVENTING THE PEOPLE FROM RETURNING TO THEIR
HOMES AND JOBS IS THE PRESENCE OF SYRIAN FORCES, ESPECIALLY
IN ASHRAFIYEH, HADATH AND SYN-AR-RUMMANAH, THE AREAS WHICH
WERE THE TARGET OF THE BARBARIC BOMBARDMENT WHICH DESTROYED
HUNDREDS OF HOMES AND KILLED AND WOUNDED HUNDREDS OF CITIZENS.

C. "THE SYRIAN FORCES HAD BEEN EXPECTED TO WITHDRAW FROM
ASHRAFIYAH COMPLETELY. HAD THAT HAPPENED, THE AREA'S RES-
IDENTS WOULD HAVE HAD NO REASONS TO STAY AWAY FROM THEIR
HOMES.

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E. "THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE SYRIAN FORCES TO REALIZE THAT THEIR PRESENCE IS UNWANTED AND UNNECESSARY.

E. "THE MEASURES WHICH THE UNIFIED LEBANESE FORCES ARE TAKING ARE BEING TAKEN IN SELFDEFENSE. ANY INCIDENT WHICH OCCURS IN THE NEAR OR DISTANT FUTURE WILL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SYRIAN FORCES, ESPECIALLY SINCE THESE FORCES HAVE FOR A WEEK NOW BEEN BRINGING HUGE QUANTITIES OF EQUIPMENT AND AMMUNITION TO THEIR POSITIONS IN THE RIZK TOWER AND THE MANY OTHER BUILDINGS THEY HAVE TAKEN OVER FOR NO REASON AT ALL AND IN VIOLATION OF THE SECURITY AGREEMENT."

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4. THE PORT

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A. ACCORDING TO THE BEIRUT PRESS, SIX PEOPLE WERE WOUNDED DURING THE INCIDENT AT THE PORT ON AUGUST 18 (SEE AUGUST 18 SITREP). THE PRESS SAID THAT TWO RPG'S HAD HIT THE PORT AREA DURING THE MORNING AND THAT MACHINE GUN FIRE WAS HEARD AFTER THE EXPLOSIONS. AN ADF COMMUNIQUE SAID THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RPG'S WERE FIRED FROM AN AREA WHERE PHALANGIST MILITIA ARE STATIONED.

B. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BEIRUT PORT HUNRI PHARAON SAID AFTER THE INCIDENT THAT "I HAVE OPENED THE PORT AND I WILL KEEP IT OPEN." A PORT WINCH-OPERATOR TOLD IKE, HOWEVER, THAT: "BACK TO WORK ORDERS I AM READY TO ACCEPT, A DEATH SENTENCE I AM NOT."

C. THE PORT REMAINS EFFECTIVELY CLOSED.

5. URQUHART IN LEBANON

A. UN UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS BRIAN URQUHART ARRIVED IN BEIRUT THE AFTERNOON OF AUGUST 18. HE TOLD REPORTERS THAT HE WAS HERE TO CONTACT THE PARTIES CONCERNED WITH SOUTH LEBANON AND FOLLOW UP ON IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 425. LEBANON'S AMBASSADOR TO THE UN, GHASSAN TUENI, TOLD REPORTERS THAT "MR. URQUHART IS HERE ON A FACT-FINDING MISSION WHICH WILL HELP THE SECRETARY SENERAL PREPARE HIS REPORT TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL EVALUATING THE PERFORMANCE AND STATUS OF UNIFIL, ONE MONTH PRIOR TO THE EXPIRATION OF ITS MANDATE."

B. URQUHART IS SCHEDULED TO MEET TODAY (AUGUST 19) WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS, PRIME MINISTER AL-HOSS AND FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS. HE PLANS TO GO TO NAQUARAH ON AUGUST 20.

C. IKE QUOTED UN SOURCES AS SAYING THAT "URQUHART HAS NOT BROUGHT ANY MAGIC FORMULA WITH HIM TO BREAK THE SOUTHERN STALEMATE."

6. COMMENTS OF ARMY OFFICER

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A. ACCORDING TO IKE, A "SENIOR OFFICER" OF THE LEBANESE ARMY ON AUGUST 18 ACCUSED THE U.S., U.N., AND ISRAEL OF GOING BACK ON PLEDGES THEY HAD MADE ABOUT THE DEPLOYMENT OF TROOPS IN

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SOUTHERN LEBANON. THE OFFICER REPORTEDLY MADE THIS STATEMENT AFTER THE ARRIVAL OF UNDER SECRETARY URQUHART. THE SENIOR OFFICER WAS QUOTED BY THE NEWSPAPER AS SAYING:

B. "THE ARMY COMMAND WARNED FROM THE OUTSET OF THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE DISPATCH OF THE MILITARY UNIT TO TIBNIN. WE TOLD EVERYONE THAT THE LEBANESE ARMY CANNOT FIGHT ISRAEL, BUT THE UNITED STATES, THE UNITED NATIONS AND TEL AVIV ITSELF PRESENTED GUARANTEES THAT THE UNIT'S ADVANCE WOULD NOT BE BLOCKED AND THAT ISRAEL DID NOT OPPOSE OUR DEPLOYMENT IN TIBNIN."

C. "THE ARMY ALSO RECEIVED ASSURANCES FROM SYRIA AND THE PAL-ESTINIAN ORGANIZATIONS... NO ONE HONORED HIS PLEDGE EXCEPT SYRIA, WHICH SECURED THE UNIT'S ROUTE UP TO KAWKABA, AND THE PALESTINIANS, WHO KEPT THEIR WORD AND DID NOT RESIST THE ADVANCE. WHEN THE MILITARY UNIT WAS SHELLED BY THE ISRAELIS (AND WE HAVE PROOF THAT THE ISRAELIS WERE THE ONES WHO OPENED FIRE), THE LEBANESE AIR FORCE JETS WHICH WERE ACCOMPANYING THE UNIT TRIED TO ATTACK MAJOR SAAD HADDAD AND THE MILITIAS UNDER HIS COMMAND. HOWEVER, WE RECEIVED A WRITTEN THREAT FROM THE ISRAELI MINISTER OF DEFENSE, EZER WEIZMAN. WE STILL HAVE THE NOTE TO PROVE IT. THE NOTE SAID ANY PLANE WHICH ATTACKED THE MILITIAS WOULD BE SHOT DOWN."

D. THE LEBANESE ARMY UNIT IS CAPABLE OF WIPING OUT MAJOR SAAD HADDAD AND HIS MEN "IN A MATTER OF HOURS, AND OUR TROOPS ARE ANXIOUS TO PROVE THEIR METTLE, BUT THEY CAN'T FIGHT ISRAEL."

E. THE LEBANESE ARMY COULD NOT DISCONTINUE THE WAGES OF HADDAD, SHIDIAC AND OTHER REBEL SOLDIERS UNLESS THEY WERE DISMISSED OR REFERRED TO THE MILITARY DISCIPLINARY COUNCIL. NO DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN ON EITHER OPTION, BUT A DECISION HAS BEEN MADE NOT TO SEND THE SALARIES OF THE REBEL OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS TO THEM ANY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LONGER. "SAAD HADDAD AND SAMI SHIDIAK WILL BE ASKED TO CASH THEIR SALARIES IN BEIRUT AND THE SOLDIERS WITH THEM WILL BE ASKED TO REPORT TO KAWKABA FOR THEIR WAGES." THE ARMY EXPECTS MANY OF THE HADDAD-SHIDIAK TROOPS TO REBEL AND JOIN THE ARMY UNIT IN KAWKABA.

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